**National Social Assistance Programme**

1207. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had introduced National Social Assistance Programme on the 15th August, 1995 for the benefit of rural women and old people in the country;

(b) if so, whether this programme is still in operation;

(c) if so, whether any assistance is being provided to the State Governments in implementing these schemes;

(d) what has been the response to this programme in the country particularly in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) the number of women and old people who have been benefited under this programme so far in the country, particularly in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, However, the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is for the benefit of the concerned beneficiaries belonging to the both rural and urban areas.

(b) The National Social Assistance Programme is still in operation with its three components namely:-

(i) The National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS).

(ii) The National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS).

(iii) The National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS).

(c) The NSAP is a Centrally Sponsored Programme to extend 100% Central Assistace to the State/UTs to provide the benefits under it in accordance with norms, Guidelines and conditions laid down by the Central Government.

(d) The response received from all the States/UTs, including Andhra Pradesh is good.

(e) Out of the three schemes of the NSAP, only one namely NMBS is solely for the benefit of women. The information received from the States/UTs so far, indicate that 692518 women have been benefited under the scheme during 1995-96. Information from some States/UTs are still awaited. The number of women benefited in Andhra Pradesh during the year is 207427.

The other two schemes are common to both men and women. No separate figures for women along is available. Information received so far from the States/UTs indicate the number of beneficiaries under these two scheme in the country and in Andhra Pradesh are as below:

| Scheme | All India | Andhra Pradesh |
|---|---|---|
| NO APS | 1874873 | 894600 |
| NFBS | 70311 | 20390 |

**Bakreswar Thermal Power Project**

1208. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether order has been placed for units 1 & 2 (2x210 MW) of Bakreswar Thermal Power Project in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the time schedule for commissioning the units;

(c) the source of financing, method of tendering, import component of the main equipments; and

(d) the per MW cost at 1996 level and also at the time of commissioning alongwith comparative cost/MW of coal based fast track power projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The First Unit is likely to be commissioned in November, 1999 and the Second Unit in May, 2000 respectively.

(c) Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan have agreed to extend loan to finance construction of Unit I & II alongwith some other common facilities. International Competitive Bidding procedure (ICB) has been followed for Main Plant Package and Coal Handling Package in terms of OECF guidelines. The import component include steam turbine, generators, transformers and associated equipments.